



COLLEGE *of*  
CENTRAL  
FLORIDA

## College of Central Florida Newton Perry Aquatic Center Frequently Asked Questions

The College of Central Florida has partnered with the nonprofit organization [Ocala Aquatics](#) for more than 13 years to allow the Newton Perry Aquatic Center to be used for swim lessons, high school swim team training, lifeguard training, recreation and much more. Ocala Aquatics runs a quality program and the aquatic center plays a very important role in our community. However, recent cuts in state appropriations of approximately \$2.25 million have put the college in a position where it can longer provide resources to a facility that does not directly support our academic and workforce mission.

The college fully understands the importance of Ocala Aquatics and that's why for 13 years the college has leased the pool and building facility for an extremely affordable rate of \$10 per year and has been responsible for maintaining the facility. Here you will find responses to the questions we have been asked and links to media coverage.

### **Why is the pool in need of such substantial improvements?**

In 2013, a professional third-party aquatic and design engineering firm identified numerous issues with the condition of the facility. The pool facility was originally constructed in 1978 and was last renovated in 1994. Substantial investment and reconstruction is required to address the current deficiencies to make the pool compliant with Florida Building and Energy Codes, and to create a safe, accessible and energy-efficient aquatic center.

### **How has the estimated cost been calculated?**

Based on the 2013 evaluation report by Johnson Smith Architects, P.A., the anticipated cost of reconstruction is approximately \$1.3 million. At the request of Ocala Aquatics, we also contacted Village Pools of Central Florida for a renovation cost estimate which was approximately \$1 million, and Village Pools corroborated Johnson Smiths' report that a complete reconstruction of the pool could be accomplished for \$1.3 million. These numbers were calculated by the firms for budgeting purposes and take into account that, as a commercial pool, the significant renovations and repairs will require the involvement of a licensed commercial pool engineer as required under state codes.

The college's estimated cost to support the pool operations (building maintenance, custodial maintenance, grounds maintenance, safety and security, communication, insurance, and utilities) is \$40,000 to \$60,000 annually. In his TV [interview with WCJB reporter Curtis Jennings](#), CF President Dr. Jim Henningsen stated that a \$1.5 million donation would support the renovations and several years of operating expenses. The full details were cut from the TV broadcast. These amounts are in line with statements made by Ocala Aquatics representatives when they [set a \\$3 million fundraising goal in 2007](#). If estimated funds are raised, the next step would be for an official Request for Proposals to be created to receive qualified proposals and more detailed pricing from licensed commercial pool designers and engineers.

### **How much notice was given to Ocala Aquatics?**

In August 2013, Ocala Aquatics' seven-year lease expired. The college offered a two-year lease and notified the nonprofit that they would need to identify funding solutions to refurbish the aging pool. The college and CF Foundation offered help where possible, but were unable to lead fundraising efforts that did not support our academic mission as we were focused on a fundraising campaign for Health Sciences program expansion. The lease was extended for an additional two years in 2015 with the understanding that if fundraising efforts were not successful, the facility would need to be closed. On May 15, 2017, upon learning that Ocala Aquatics would not meet its fundraising goal, the college informed the nonprofit that the lease ending Sept. 30, 2017, would not be renewed.

### **Who is responsible for the pool?**

The Newton Perry Aquatic Center was built by the college to accommodate physical education classes. When the pool was no longer needed for credit courses, it was used for community programs. In 2003, the college leased the facility to Ocala Aquatics to give the organization full use of the pool and adjacent building. Under the agreement, Ocala Aquatics is responsible for \$10 per year rental fee, partial utilities, natural gas, pool chemicals, replacement and maintenance of pool accessories (lane ropes, pool covers, kick boards, buoys, etc.) maintenance and repair of pool equipment (pumps, filtration system, etc.) up to \$2,500 per year, casualty and liability insurance in amounts of \$1 million, and lifeguards; and the college is responsible for providing security officers, janitorial/custodial services, repair and maintenance of the pool complex building exterior, windows, doors, HVAC system, exterior painting, plumbing, janitorial services; repair and maintenance of pool equipment (pumps, filtration system, boilers, etc.); maintenance and repair of the fence, parking

areas, and grounds; cost of repairing vandalism occurring outside the hours of Aquatic Center operations, providing of telephone, internet access, and IT support, mail services, and property casualty insurance. In addition, the college incurred approximately \$200,000 in costs for repairs when the pool building burned in 2010.

**What solutions have been explored?**

In 2013, we recommended Ocala Aquatics engage in a “save the pool” community, capital campaign to raise the funds needed to update and maintain the pool, as we understand the importance of this community resource and the passion this community has for the center. Unfortunately, to date they have been unable to secure funding. We have also tried to assist this effort by reaching out to other potential partners, such as the city, county and YMCA, to explore partnership opportunities. These organizations were unable to commit at that time to investing in the aquatic center. We also offered the assistance of our college grant writing team to develop grant applications as Ocala Aquatics indicated their intention to apply for a corporate foundation grant but they declined the offer. An application was submitted in March 2017.

**How are comparable resources in other communities run?**

Community aquatic centers in Florida are most commonly run by either the local city or county governments or by nonprofits such as YMCAs or foundations. For example, in Northwest Florida the Emerald Coast Fitness Foundation was formed in 2015 with the mission of reopening the YMCA pool facilities in Fort Walton Beach and Destin. The Bernie R. Lefebvre Aquatic Center opened in Fort Walton Beach in December 2015. The foundation also secured a contract with the Mattie Kelly Arts Foundation to take over the old YMCA pool complex in Destin and has been fundraising since last January to get the facility up and running. It is slated to open this month.

**Why does the college not have the funding available to maintain the pool?**

In addition to the added funds needed to address declining condition of the pool facility, this year the college saw a reduction in state funds; approximately \$2.25 million in operating funds were taken away from the college. Going forward, the College of Central Florida can no longer divert resources away from our students and academic programs to support a facility that does not directly support our academic mission.

### **Does CF have plans for the property where the aquatic center is located?**

CF has no plans for the property. At the current time, our only plan for new facilities is a Health Sciences Center, which would be located at the west end of campus, closer to the interstate. CF has received first-year funding from the state and a \$6 million commitment from the Marion County Hospital District. The facility would allow CF to expand program capacity and consolidate health sciences courses into a central location for students in nursing, emergency medical services, physical therapy, radiography and dental assisting.

### **How can the community help?**

As Dr. Henningsen has expressed to Ocala Aquatics, if a commitment of \$1.5 million is made to Ocala Aquatics for renovations and operating costs, the college would be willing to discuss a continued partnership to keep the swimming programs at the Newton Perry Aquatic Center.

### **CF Newton Perry Aquatic Center Media Coverage**

- [Group sets goal of \\$3 million for aquatic center](#) June 16, 2007
- [CF News Release](#) June 14, 2017
- [Ocala Aquatics fights to save Newton Perry Aquatic Center](#) June 15, 2017
- [WUFT: Aquatic Center](#) June 15, 2017
- [Last lap for CF pool](#) June 17, 2017
- [Jim Ross column: At the CF pool it's time to either sink or swim](#) June 17, 2017
- [Rotary looks to help CF pool effort](#) June 20, 2017

June 21, 2017